C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KYIV 002977

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2017
TAGS: PGOV PREL UP
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: RADA SCHEDULES PM VOTE FOR DECEMBER 11

Classified By: Ambassador for reasons 1.4(b,d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Rada Speaker Yatsenyuk ended another day of
finger-pointing and delaying tactics in the Rada by
announcing that the parliament would hold the confirmation
vote on Tymoshenko as Prime Minister on Tuesday December 11
-- the end of the five-day deadline for considering a prime
minister nomination as required by the Law on the Cabinet of
Ministers and the Rada rules. Yatsenyuk and Tymoshenko also
suggested that the Rada might also vote on the Cabinet on the
same day. However, work in the Rada has once again been
slowed by disagreements over assigning leadership positions
-- deputy speakers and committee chairs -- within the
parliament. Party of Regions blocked the rostrum December 6
and 7 obstructing work for short periods of time, while MP
Azarov accused the majority coalition of not respecting his
faction, prompting Yatsenyuk to scold MPs for treating the
parliament like a circus. In an attempt to move things
along, Tymoshenko offered to let the three opposition parties
select the First Deputy Speaker in any way they chose, and
offered to let Lytvyn Bloc and the Communists have first pick
of committee chairmanships (angering Regions who expected to
have first pick as the Rada's largest faction). However,
public statements by members of Regions and Lytvyn Bloc
showed there was no agreement over who the first deputy
speaker would be. In addition, Lytvyn and his fellow MP
Mykhaylo Syrota have been very clear that they do not see
themselves as part of a united opposition with Regions,
although Lytvyn added that neither do they intend to join the
ruling coalition.

¶2. (C) Comment. The December 11 vote will be a chance for
Tymoshenko to pass the final hurdle in her quest for the
premiership and will depend upon whether she can shore up her
support within the orange coalition, and possibly even with
other non-coalition MPs. Rumors are circulating that
Tymoshenko is offering unspecified government positions to
minority MPs to gain their support, suggesting she is still
uneasy about the vote. At the same time, Regions seems to be
dragging its feet once again, but to what end is not clear
since they seem to be weakening their bargaining power by
refusing to cooperate. They have the opportunity to place
one of their own in the First Deputy Speaker position, but
have advocated for Communist MP Adam Martynyuk, a seeming
non-starter for Lytvyn Bloc, as well as for some in the
majority. They also had the opportunity to have the first
pick of committee chairmanships, but could lose that
strategic position if the two smaller factions take
Tymoshenko up on her offer. Given the tensions between
factions, Washington congratulatory calls will need to
include the point that a new government and the Rada will
need to find ways to work more cooperatively together in
order to address key national concerns. End summary and
comment.

Rada Facing Busy Tuesday

¶3. (SBU) Yatsenyuk announced that the Rada had to vote on the
prime minister nomination within five days of receiving the
nomination from the President -- or by December 11, as
required by the CabMin law and the Rada rules. He also cited
Rada rules that dictate that the First Deputy and Deputy
Speakers be elected before the PM vote. (Note. By this
logic, the Rada should also distribute all committee
leadership positions before the PM vote.) However, Yatsenyuk
stressed that if no decision is made on the deputy speakers,
he will move onto the PM vote regardless. In addition,
Presidential Chief of Staff Baloha publicly reminded
Tymoshenko and OU-PSD head Kyrylenko that the Presidential
Secretariat was still expecting quick progress on the 12 laws

SIPDIS
laid out in the coalition agreement.

¶4. (SBU) Tymoshenko and Yatsenyuk both suggested that the
Rada might consider the government slate on Tuesday. The
constitution says the vote on PM takes place before ministers
can be nominated, but once she is confirmed, Tymoshenko can
present the ministerial nominees to the Rada. Tymoshenko
implied that the two factions are not completely agreed on
the nominees, even though the distribution of positions
between the two coalition parties is clearly spelled out in
the coalition agreement. Tymoshenko said she will conduct
consultations with OU-PSD leaders and with Yushchenko over
the weekend to work out the final slate of ministers. She
also said she will conduct her own consultations with all
five Rada factions on December 10 and 11.

Regions Blocks Rada Rostrum

¶5. (SBU) Despite assurances Regions MP Miroshnychenko gave to

KYIV 00002977 002 OF 002

us and that his faction gave to Yatsenyuk that Regions would
not impede the Rada's work or consideration of Tymoshenko's
nomination, the faction blocked the Speaker's rostrum both
the evening of December 6 and the morning of December 7. On
the latter day, about 10 MPs blocked the rostrum where MPs
and Ministers speak from, another 20 blocked the Speaker's
dais, and others sat in the Cabinet's box. Regions MP
Shufrych said that they would continue to block the rostrum
until the orange coalition agreed to a package vote on First
Deputy Speaker and Deputy Speaker together, while MP Azarov
said that they were there to protest the fact that the
coalition was not treating Regions with more respect.

¶6. (SBU) Tymoshenko and Azarov then had a heated exchange on
the Rada floor. Tymoshenko said that that the majority
coalition was willing to support a package vote on the two
deputy speakers. BYuT has already announced that Mykola
Tomenko will be their candidate for Deputy Speaker; a job he
held in the previous Rada convocation. Noting that the three
minority parties have not been able to agree on who their
nominee will be, Tymoshenko also offered to allow CPU and the
Lytvyn Bloc to pick their committee leadership positions
first and then to split the remaining committees between
Regions and the coalition. She said that they were doing
this to make sure that the small parties felt that they had
equal rights.

¶7. (SBU) Azarov angrily responded by demanding that the
majority coalition treat Regions with "respect." He said
that Regions was "a big faction that did not tolerate
ultimatums." He said that they had never been a destructive
force and never would be, but that they would not stand for
the majority's current treatment of Regions. (Note. Azarov
was not specific about what ill treatment Regions had
suffered at the hands of BYuT/OU-PSD. End note.) Azarov
also accused Tymoshenko of offering high-level (unspecified)
positions to Regions MPs if they would demonstrate loyalty to

the orange team, an accusation that Lytvyn also made.

¶8. (C) Comment. Tymoshenko's comments in favor of a package
vote suggest that Shufrych's stated reason for the blockade
was a pretense, and that Regions is merely trying to stall.
This could be a reaction, in part, to Tymoshenko's suggested
committee distribution system, which was clearly aimed at
drawing Lytvyn Bloc and CPU away from Regions by offering
them plum committee chairmanships. Normally, the
consultative council should distribute the chairmanships by
allowing each political force to pick one position at a time
until all leadership spots are assigned. BYuT and OU-PSD
have said publicly that they would be willing to give the key
Budget Committee to Regions as the main opposition party, but
should Lytvyn Bloc get first pick, they would be likely to
scoop this committee up -- a possibility underscored by
Turchynov's December 7 comment that BYuT was fine with Lytvyn
Bloc taking control of the budget process.   If Tymoshenko is
trying to woo Lytvyn Bloc and Regions MPs to support her, it
suggests she is still worried about the numbers for her
confirmation vote. End comment.

First Deputy Speaker Undecided

¶9. (C) Underscoring the lack of consensus among the three
minority parties, Regions MP Hrytsak announced December 7
that his party, the Communists, and Lytvyn Bloc would support
Communist Adam Martynyuk for First Deputy Speaker, but Lytvyn
Bloc MP Syrota said his faction had agreed to nothing and
said he doubted that they would support anyone from the
Communist camp. Syrota also stressed that his party was not
in joint opposition with Regions and CPU; a claim made by
some in Regions. Regions MP Kolesnikov later said that there
would be no decision on deputy speaker until all three
factions were in agreement.

¶10. (SBU) Yatsenyuk adjourned the Rada session with an
impassioned plea for the factions to act constructively. He
said that they were making the Rada a "laughing-stock" and
"circus" by continually blocking the rostrum. He also asked
all factions to reach compromises at the coordination council
and then communicate those decisions back to their MPs, so
that all would honor the agreements reached by Rada
leadership.

¶11. (U) Visit Embassy Kyiv's classified website:
www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev.
Taylor